

CHILD STUDY

A QUARTERLY JOURNAL
of PARENT EDUCATION
WINTER, 1947

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Forty-five cents a copy Vol. XXV, No. 1 \$1.50 a year

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CHILD STUDY reentered as second class matter September 19, 1947, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Copyright, 1947, by Child Study Association of America, Inc. Published by the Child Study Association, 321 West 57th Street, New York 19, N. Y. Quarterly in Fall, Winter, Spring and Summer issues. 45 cents a copy, \$1.50 a year. Add 25c for all foreign subscriptions.

HEADLINES



The discrepancy felt by all thoughtful people today between the nations' wish for peace and the fatalistic fear of war has its counterpart in the conflicting teachings we offer our children. They learn at an early age from their elders that they should live in kindness and cooperation with their fellows. Then, from the protection and idealism of home they emerge into an outside world of cutthroat competition, personal and national. Few parents and teachers recognize this conflict or prepare children to face their dilemma realistically, and with deliberate choice.

With such confusions and contradictions in mind, the Child Study Association of America has organized its annual conference this coming spring around the important issue: "The Problem of Human Aggressions—How Do They Develop? Must They Lead to War?" Starting with a psychiatric consideration of the manifestations of aggression in the child's early years, the speakers will broaden the topic into a discussion of whether this trait in human personality must lead necessarily and inevitably to war. The Conference will close with a presentation of the role which education should and can play in preparing children for the real world.

The Conference will take place on March 1, 1948, and will be conducted as usual in a morning, a luncheon and an afternoon session. Because of limitations of space and the great demand for seats, it will be necessary to make reservations in advance for all three of these sessions.



Departing somewhat from the usual custom of grouping all articles in each issue of CHILD STUDY around one special topic, the next number will touch upon various aspects of recent developments in child study under the title: "Understanding Our Children—Some New Approaches."

What Is Fear?

PARENTS use the terms fear and anxiety to express the multitude of timidities which children show toward objects or events in their daily lives. By "anxiety" they are likely to mean a lesser degree of feeling than "fear." They believe vaguely that fears and anxieties develop because the child lacks something called "security" and that security is offered or not offered to a child in pretty tangible ways, much as he is offered food and shelter. Security, they know, is bound up with the love parents give their children and the amount of parental protection and reassurance upon which the child can draw. Parents are naturally baffled, therefore, when they see children who are apparently richly loved and protected still showing symptoms of many fears and anxieties.

The psychiatrist, when he speaks strictly, distinguishes between fear and anxiety. To the psychiatrist, fear is the normal reaction of any intelligent person to immediate danger; anxiety is the reaction to something which in itself presents no real danger. If we see a truck suddenly bearing down on us at a street corner at high speed we are normal in feeling fear; there's nothing neurotic about it. But the widely prevalent fear of even harmless snakes and mice is not grounded in reality and therefore is more truly termed anxiety. We may quite realistically fear war and the atomic bomb (the wonder is that we don't fear them more), but the national jitters over surrendering even one iota of our food supplies for foreign consumption is so out of line with reality that it seems more closely related to anxiety. Fear, then, is a normal reaction to real external danger; anxiety is a reaction to an unconscious danger arising within one's emotional life. It is "real" enough, too, even though the individual who has it may project his feelings onto a harmless situation and is wholly unaware of the actual nature of the unconscious fear. He behaves *as if* the harmless situation were dangerous.

To make the matter more complicated, neurotic anxieties are often supported by a modicum of realistic fear. There *is* such a thing as poliomyelitis and a child *may* contract it, but a parent who is constantly obsessed by the expectation is nevertheless a victim of neurotic anxiety. Children *have* been kidnapped, but a child who expects it nightly regardless of every reasonable precaution is just as truly an "anxious" child as one who expects lions and tigers to enter his room and devour him.

A further characteristic of anxieties is that they are fixed and impervious to logic. You cannot argue the truly hypochondriacal adult out of the fear of illness any more than you can argue a timid child out of a "big man with wings" if such is the shape his fantasy has assumed. This again is because anxiety has its roots in the whole unconscious life and the real source of danger lies buried within.

Neither parents nor children can be expected to know of what the child who cries out at night is really afraid. Asking cannot possibly bring a true answer. But though some anxiety is an integral part of childhood, parents can play an enormous part in determining whether it comes in acute or mild form and whether or not a child can eventually resolve it in a satisfactory way. Though words and logic may be futile, the tone of our words may carry infinite reassurance. Though parents cannot always spare their children emotional difficulties they still play a major role in determining whether or not children cope with their troubles effectively and whether thereafter they can take successive steps forward on the road to maturity.

THE EDITORS.

Understanding Children's Fears

ALINE B. AUERBACH

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"MY CHILD is afraid of the dark and won't stay in his room at night," says one mother. "My child is afraid to go down on the street alone," says another. Other mothers report other fears—fear of dogs, of the noise of airplanes, of flying creatures, of doctors, of having an automobile run out of gas, of loud voices, or new and strange places. The list is long and varied. Sometimes the fears seem to have been caused by some specific experience; more often they seem to have no reason or basis in fact.

There is nothing more disturbing to an adult than to see a child in the grip of an overwhelming fear, unless perhaps it is to have a child refuse to eat. In both situations, a mother feels herself helpless, unable to understand what makes her child behave that way, and unable to help him to overcome it. Both situations are apt to arouse her own fears and her own insecurity; she becomes impatient and the child feels her irritation and criticism at a time when he especially needs her sympathy and understanding.

It is in very young children that one sees a preponderance of fearful behavior, often quite suddenly expressed. A ten-month-old baby whose mother has given him loving care and wise handling, suddenly howls at being put in his play pen on the back porch where he had stayed happily before. Another little boy, who had always enjoyed his bath time, will suddenly cry at being put into the water, and it may take months of patient handling before he will accept the bath happily again. Somewhere around the age

of two a child who has slept peacefully night after night will suddenly wake up crying and come wandering into his parents' room, refusing to go back to sleep without having the light on. These situations are reported in such large number that they cannot be ignored or explained on the basis of external factors alone. Actually, they throw a revealing light on an important phase of children's early growth and adjustment.

The helplessness of an infant lying in his crib is apparent to everyone. He is, of course, dependent on others for his very existence. Not only does he have to be fed, and kept warm and clean, he cannot even change his position himself in the first weeks. Gradually, as his body develops, he begins to initiate activity, becoming more competent as he slowly builds up skills by which to satisfy his bodily needs. By a child's second year, he has made important strides toward this physical independence. Emotionally, however, the development is not as similar as we are inclined to believe.

For he is still emotionally dependent on those who have cared for him, and his ties to them are deep and basic. Because his parents (and especially his mother) have fed and clothed and cuddled him, they have become the center of his universe, and hold his fate in their hands. They are his refuge, a source of comfort when he is hurt, and they are his strength, a source of courage and confidence with which he can meet the many strange and confusing experiences that confront him in his ever-growing world. Without them, or their acceptable substitute, he is lost.

If one recognizes not only the fact but also something of the quality of this emotional dependence one can understand what it may mean to a child if he feels support is or may be withdrawn. The mother who finds herself preoccupied with a new baby or with her husband's illness or even with some minor crisis in the house often wonders why her child chooses that particularly inconvenient time to act up. She is unaware that her preoccupation may be making him feel threatened and alone, that his fear of losing her is expressing itself in this difficult behavior. It some-

times takes very little to disturb a young child as he struggles slowly to feel secure in the world around him.

And yet how often children do experience this feeling of being alone and desolate. Sometimes situations occur—some accident or emergency—which cause a parent to be removed from the child's life suddenly and without warning. Such separations are usually only temporary, but to a sensitive child it may seem as if they were forever. One little girl put this into words very clearly. She was finding it hard to stay in school happily during the first few days there, although on the whole she was independent and well-adjusted. Her mother had been with her consistently except when the second child had been born two years before. In order to reassure the child the mother said that she would be waiting outside for her when school was out. When the child still demurred, the mother said, "I've never left you alone; you know that." To this the child replied, "Oh yes, you did. Remember when you didn't come back from the hospital?"

There are other more subtle separations that a child may feel just as keenly, ranging from occasional shifts of mood in which the parent withdraws his usual love and interest, to the more constant coldness and aloofness of the parent who, often without knowing it, emotionally rejects his child for one reason or another. A parent's open anger and hostility may literally make a child tremble in his shoes, though some children prefer even this to the other kind of parental attitude, which gives them no feeling of contact or relationship and which leaves them both anxious and afraid.

This state of uneasiness to which little children seem so susceptible may account in part for many of their sudden and seemingly unwarranted fears. These children need to be reassured and comforted until they gain the inner strength they need. The child who gets up crying for his mother at night may need to be taken back to his bed again and again, and tucked in and petted and quieted until he knows by her presence (and often without words) that he can count on her to help him. It is a hard chore for mothers who are tired and harassed, but what may seem to be the hard way is the shortest one in the end. The door can be kept open for a while and a light left on in the room, and later, in the hall. The child will gradually give up these crutches when he no longer needs them, provided his parents are alert to guide him step by step. He is usually quite pleased when he is able to give them up and can conform to what is expected of him. In this way he gains his parents' approval and his life-line is not only reestablished but reinforced.

As the child grows older, there are other, deeper

reasons why he needs this support. Out of his close tie to his mother, he comes to feel that he wants her love for himself alone. As he becomes more aware of the people around him and of their claims on her, their presence arouses in him the fear that because of them his mother will be lost to him. He is apt to resent his father, who comes home in the evening to share his mother's room and attention and to live with her in a world from which he is shut out. The arrival of a new sister or brother or, for second and third children, the growing awareness of older ones who have been there first, also threatens him, causing him to feel hostile and aggressive to those with whom he feels he is competing. The prime attachment to the mother is characteristic of girls as well as boys in their earliest years, but such patterns shift back and forth from time to time. For small girls, it is eventually the father who becomes the important one and the mother who is resented.

These feelings are deep and strong, and they are universal. The child soon learns, however, that they are not acceptable in the world in which he lives. He must not crave so passionately his mother's sole affection; it is wrong to be hostile and aggressive to those who seem to stand in his way and whom, at the same time, he also loves. As he tries to curb or to deny these strong and normal instinctual drives, their very strength makes him feel guilty and afraid. In struggling to conquer his fear he may deny the fear in himself, only to project it onto objects in his external world. He may, therefore, become acutely afraid of a policeman, let us say, or a doctor, or a big animal. These figures, by their very nature, act as a convenient peg on which to hang the fears which the child finds too much to bear. By exaggerating their real role, he uses these objects as a justification in the external world for his inner feelings. Fighting and aggression on the playground may also terrify him because they stir up his own aggressive wishes which he dare not admit. Again the modes of expression are endless and unpredictable. This conflict, so tied up with a child's effort to find his proper place in the family group, goes on for the most part without his being aware of it. And because it is unconscious, of course, a small child cannot answer you when you ask him, "Why are you afraid?" He only knows that he is afraid; he hasn't any idea why.

The peak of this conflict and struggle comes early in the young child's life, usually before he is of school age. By the time he has started school some of his difficulties have begun to fade out as the reality of his daily life proves his fears to be unfounded. In

spite of the demands of the other children, his mother is able to give him attention after all. His father doesn't always punish or scold, but is kind, too, and comes to be quite a hero, someone who is worth imitating. Sisters or brothers aren't always in the way and nuisances, but can also be fun; and there are times when they are even worth having on one's side as allies when children and parents find themselves in opposite camps. During the school years boys and girls seem on the whole far less susceptible to fears as they put aside their concern about the basic problems, some of which have been so briefly suggested here, and as they turn their attention to the many absorbing details of their school and social world. At adolescence, however, early conflicts and insecurities may surge up again and find expression in the stormy shifts of mood and passionate self-questioning so typical of that age.

But at any stage of the way, new events in his life may revive or reinforce a child's earlier fears and anxieties. The child who is afraid to go to school when there has been nothing in the school experience itself to justify his fear, is acting not in terms of the immediate, but rather in terms of what the immediate reawakens from his unconscious past. School, functioning independently in a new and impersonal world, may symbolize the complete separation from his mother that he has always feared—and at times desperately wanted, too; or it may force on him with dramatic finality the fact that his mother and the baby are together happily without him. Being made fun of because he is a dub on the baseball team is unpleasant enough in itself for any boy, but this may also touch off his deeper hidden concern that he may not be able to take on adequately the role of boy (and of man) in other respects. All he recognizes at the moment, however, may be fear of the other boys and of playing baseball at all.

Taking Over Parents' Fears

Children are sensitive, too, to their parents' fears, and often take them over in varying degrees as part of themselves. A mother who was terrified of thunderstorms used to wake her children at night during a storm to be sure that they were safe and secure! Small wonder, then, that these children also grew up afraid of storms, and had to learn later to meet the real situations presented by storms divorced from the emotional overtones that had accompanied them. Children react not only to specific fears such as these, but also to the more tenuous but often even more paralyzing anxieties of parents, whether they are ex-

pressed openly or are merely in the constant background of family attitudes. Oversolicitude about health matters, overrestriction of a child's activities because the parents fear danger or lack confidence in the child's ability to meet new situations, too high standards of manners and social behavior because the parents fear criticism and non-acceptance by the neighborhood group—in these and many other ways mothers and fathers put unnecessary strain on their children because of their own inner conflicts and confusions.

What Can Be Done?

What can be done, then, to help children meet their fears, and to keep them from being overwhelmed by them? If one recognizes something of the general dynamics and the underlying sources of fear in children, the problem becomes not hopeless, but challenging.

First, there is the challenge to parents, teachers and all who have any contact with children to understand the complex interplay of forces from within and those from without that determine the growth of a child's personality, and to guide the child in accordance with the sound principles of mental health and growth. This means, in practice, a greater acceptance of the child's normal instinctual drives, and of his hostile as well as his friendly feelings. It means helping him to control and redirect his aggressions and hostility rather than condemning him so that he is burdened with guilt. It means, also, accepting the fact that for all children growth brings with it some pain and denial, and that children can accept this more readily if the adults themselves are not devastated by it.

Second, there are some fear-producing situations that can be avoided by planning and foresight. If children are to be left with a stranger, even when they are very young, it should be with someone who is at least familiar with the routines to which the child is accustomed, and who knows the child's special needs. Wherever possible, the stranger should arrive while the parents are still there, and so be introduced into the situation gradually with the child's full knowledge. This procedure forestalls the shock a child experiences when, for example, he wakes up at night to find a totally unfamiliar face.

If a child has to undergo an operation, he should be prepared for it ahead of time, having the situation explained to him up to the level of his understanding. It is important for one or both parents to take the child there, and—although many doctors and many hospitals still object—to stay with him until he is

anaesthetized. They should also be with him when he regains consciousness to help him through his pain and discomfort, and they should stay with him as much as possible. If children are rushed into operations without warning or explanation, they feel assaulted and injured far beyond the actual pain. If they are left alone, as well, they may also feel lost and bewildered and resentful. A mother who left her child at the hospital to have his tonsils removed reports that when she came to call for him he wouldn't even look at her.

In any emergency situation, children stand the strain far better when they feel themselves part of the family group. During the war years this was proven many times over. In England, for example, young children who were taken from their parents in the early months of the war seemed to have many more fears and other symptoms of disturbance than the same children showed later on under actual bombing, when they were back at home. One may conclude from this that children, especially in their early years, should not be separated from their families unless it is absolutely necessary.

If Adults Explain

Third, children are less fearful or less vulnerable to fear if adults explain what may be terrifying because it is unknown. It is difficult to explain death to a child, as it may be difficult to explain it to ourselves, but recognizing it as a fact and sharing this recognition helps even a small child to accept it when it comes. If the death of a relative or friend is cloaked in mystery and discussed in whispers, it is much more likely to arouse fears in the child. He may fear that his parents will die or he himself, perhaps, for reasons that may seem strange and irrelevant to others, but that are valid to him and are the result of his confusion and disturbance. He should be given every help in bringing these fears—and fantasies—out into the open to be measured against the real facts.

In sex matters, too, children are likely to build up fears and fantasies, especially if they do not know or if they misunderstand various aspects of this complex phase of growth. The need for sex knowledge in adolescence has been stressed for many years, but the subtle and continuous psychosexual development of children from infancy on is far less clearly understood. Even with the best guidance, children may bring to sex matters their own special ideas and interpretations, but misconceptions can sometimes be corrected if parents and teachers discuss these subjects directly and at the same time give the children a

chance to say what is on their minds. Children from their early years on need help in understanding and accepting sex differences. They need to know that these differences in anatomy are basic, that they are determined and fixed from the beginning of life and that they are not the result of any loss or punishment. They need to know—at the level of their age and understanding—the facts of the origin of life and of the birth process; as they grow older they need to know something of the changes in the human body as it matures. At the same time, it is important that these facts be given the child not merely as textbook items but placed in the framework of personal, human relations.

With the crowded conditions under which millions of families are living today, many small children are confronted with sex situations which they cannot understand. We are beginning to recognize that when children share their parents' room, they often sense physical intimacies even if they seem not to have witnessed them. Since they cannot understand what this relationship means in the lives of adults, they become frightened and upset, often misinterpreting the sex act as one of violence, and feeling at the same time that they are excluded and abandoned as well. This is one of the reasons why children should not sleep in their parents' room if it is at all possible to make other arrangements.

Fourth, we must regard a child's fears as important and real and help him gradually to face them, whether we understand the causes or not. A girl who had been badly frightened by a big dog built up a new concept of 'dog' by having a small puppy of her own to care for. A boy who was afraid of going on the ice, and who was found to be frightened of water in general because he had fallen off a dock as a small child, gradually overcame his fear as he learned to swim and to skate. Sometimes these problems can be resolved by practical common-sense methods. If not, if the child continues to be disturbed, it becomes apparent that the situation is more than the parent himself can handle. In such cases, then, parents should look for professional help and guidance.

There is no single formula or blueprint for parents to follow. When a child is unable to function freely because he is afraid or anxious the situation calls for all the resourcefulness and imagination of the adults around him. To help a child forward when he is caught in the mesh of his fears is deeply rewarding. As he comes to meet his daily world with more confidence and courage, one has dramatic evidence that he has attained an important new step in his growth.

The Threat of Divorce

GEORGE J. MOHR, M.D.

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DIVORCE signalizes a failure in the relationship between two people. If the two people are parents, their children will inevitably be affected by this failure. Although divorce is often a necessary surgical operation which may lead to eventual improvement in the life-situations of the members of the family involved, it is still surgery and always follows a period of disturbance in family relationships that has already had its effect upon the lives of the children. According to whether this surgery is well done or bungled, the more immediate effects of the break itself may be minimized or aggravated.

Although very young children may have little or no awareness of the nature of the conflict between parents that ultimately leads to divorce, they do not escape the concomitant tensions. The anxieties and hostilities which are an inescapable part of a disturbed relationship between married people will naturally influence the manner in which each parent deals with the child. A child is highly sensitive to the emotional atmosphere of his household. Whatever he encounters in the attitudes of the parents will be accurately mirrored either in a sense of assurance or in anxiety and uncertainty about the world in which he lives.

To a young child, divorce means a threatening disruption or disturbance of his relationship with one or possibly both parents. Even where divorce does not mean his physical separation over any appreciable period from one parent, the very fact of separation of the family members is interpreted by the child in varying ways. Let us assume that during the entire critical period of divorce procedure parents have been quite civilized in their conduct, that they have done what they could to spare the child exposure to their conflicts and have been aware of the dangerous effects upon him of any overly aggressive or depreciatory behavior toward each other. The child must nevertheless face the harsh fact that there is no love be-

tween the parents; he will inevitably feel that one or both have done badly by the other, and he will hold one or both responsible for his own deprivation. This theme has its infinite variations, ranging from overt to strongly repressed reactions of resentment toward both parents, or toward the one the child believes to be responsible for his own discomfort. He may develop accordingly an intensification of dependent, possessive attachment to the parent upon whom he can best focus his positive feelings. Too often a parent suffering the distress incidental to severing of relationship with a mate unwittingly furthers this intensified relationship with the child.

The normal family setting offers the young child the best opportunity to develop initial awareness of the nature of adults, their meaning to him and to each other. The process whereby children learn to live in a family life, share responsibilities and satisfactions, cope with their competitive feelings, and through a process of normal identification with a parent, steer toward a concept of self as a person somewhat like their own parent, is well known to readers of this journal. Divorce during the early years of childhood tends to disrupt the possibilities for this normal course of development.

Where a divorce leads to a real physical separation between the child and one parent, that parent is more likely to be the father. Children, however, obviously need both mothers and fathers. It is very difficult for the very little boy, deprived of association with a father, to take some of the steps essential in his development. He cannot experience the relationship he needs to his father as a strong, guiding and rather authoritarian person who protects him and upon whom he depends, or that later phase, always tremendous in its implication for a growing boy, when he senses that his father accepts and approves of him because of boyish or manly attitudes and conduct. The little girl, on the other hand, needs a father to be in love with for a while. Later on, to be sure, she may discover and even magnify all the shortcomings of an imperfect parent, but her early love, trust and confidence in her father sets patterns that have healthy repercussions in her later relationships with young men and women. Children deprived of these earliest experiences in relation to the father are at the mercy of many accidental factors. The father's absence from

the home is regarded as desertion, at times provoking attitudes of deep resentment toward him, or toward the mother, who is then held responsible for sending the father away. With some children, the father remains someone neither known nor understood and their fantasy can make of him a creature dangerous and fearsome in nature. This is not invention on the writer's part, but a truth readily discerned by anyone with the patience and skill to discover what goes on in the mind and feelings of a disturbed and unhappy child. Such reactions are significant because, although often remote from reality, they are carried over nevertheless into the unconscious emotional orientation of the child in adolescence and even adulthood, and disturb his capacity to find ease, comfort and wholesome satisfactions in good personal relationships.

Effect Upon Older Children

Older children, of course, may also suffer from the effects of years of disharmony in parental relationships, but there is always the possibility that their essential needs have been met by parents who have loved them and have attempted to protect them from the disharmonies in the lives of the adults. As with younger children, older boys and girls are likely to feel very strong reactions of fear to the loss of one or both parents, and frequently deep resentment toward the parent considered by the child to be more at fault. But to the extent that healthy developmental patterns of early childhood have already been set, and good relationships maintained, the general emotional development may be less threatened.

Preadolescent and early adolescent children tend to react sharply to the implications of divorce. This is at best a relatively unstable period in the emotional life of the child when he tends to be doubtful of his own ability to find acceptance among his mates. He questions his own competence and worthwhileness, and at the same time is mistrustful of the attitudes of others toward him. Disturbance in the relationships between the parents at this juncture intensifies these questioning attitudes.

The manner in which the child interprets the fact of separation of the parents and copes with it will depend largely upon the basic attitudes of the parents toward each other. An intelligent, highly idealistic young woman, closely attached to her mother upon whom she depended even after her marriage, found herself in a difficult position shortly after the birth of her son. Becoming aware of an extra-marital interest on the part of her husband, she immediately left him and instituted divorce proceedings. She was

deeply shocked by the infidelity of her husband, and reacted as though he were a bestial, depraved creature. The child was completely cut off from all contact with the father. The mother turned her entire interest and affection toward her son. Her tendency now was to over-idealize her son, who was to be the opposite of his presumably depraved father. The result was a restrictive, possessive, overprotective attitude that had a disturbing effect upon the son. He was by turns amenable and yielding to his beloved mother, and then, under the pressure of her restrictions, rebellious and hostile. This active boy could neither accept nor fully repudiate her attentions and guidance, nor could he accept attitudes and patterns of normal social relationships from others. Eventually his mother solved her problem by a second marriage to a somewhat older, mature and tolerant man. In the restored family relationship, as the new father proved to be a real source of security and guidance for both mother and son, the son's course of development took on a more normal aspect.

The same parental attitudes which contributed to the breakdown in marital relationships are likely to continue to operate strongly after divorce, and to disturb the growing child's perspectives. A gifted woman, mother of a young daughter, found herself unable to continue in her marriage. Her practical reasons were that the husband was unreliable, undependable, unaggressive in his business affairs, did not provide financially at a level consistent with his wife's expectations. While a certain degree of reality would seem to justify her in the break-up of her marriage, it is to be noted that her expectations of her husband were very high, and her tendency to depreciate him very great. Acquaintance with her brought to light a highly competitive attitude toward him and, indeed, a strong need to be independent and professionally successful in her own right. She was from a family in which the mother always played the dominant role in family life, and in her mind fathers were rather secondary figures. Her own daughter was rather deeply attached to her father, whom she was able to idealize as little girls do. The mother's subtle depreciation of him, her necessity to prove herself a more capable and successful person created much confusion in this child's mind and feeling. While admiring the mother for her actual achievements, she deeply resented the fact that she was not permitted to hold her father in esteem, felt uncertain about finding any satisfaction in relation to either a mother or father, and eventually turned her back on both.

It is not to be inferred, however, that avoidance of

a divorce will prevent these unfortunate reactions upon the children of unharmonious parents. Like surgery, divorce cannot always be avoided. In fact, the surgery of divorce is at times the only possible way of relieving an unstable situation. If there is a genuine desire to avoid the surgery, then a constructive way must be found to cope with the family ills, or the children are likely to be the victims. I have in mind a mother who decided, for a number of reasons, some of which were not good ones, that she would remain with her husband, presumably in the interest of her young son. Remain she did, but her relationship with her son grew increasingly more difficult. It was a painful matter for her to come to recognize that while she had conserved the external form of family life, she was acting out toward her son much of her hostility toward her husband. As "a chip off the old block," in her mind, the boy felt the full weight of the unhappy woman's resentment. In a somewhat similar situation, another mother had concluded that out of duty to her daughter she must maintain her marriage: In actuality, however, feeling that she was forced to suffer her unhappy situation because of her child's need, she unwittingly harbored deep resentment toward the child. It may be wise to decide that children's interests come first, and that parents should put up with some discomforts in family life on behalf of their children. But such a decision is meaningless unless it is really accepted by the parent, so that the child does not become the victim of parental dissatisfactions.

Some Children Adjust

In stressing the uncomfortable reactions of children to divorce, one must not overlook the fact that many children, with proper assistance from their parents, can and do adjust successfully to the fact of divorce. Some children can accept honest explanations of motives and circumstances offered by their parents. Observation of the good effects of separation on the parents sometimes enables children to conclude for themselves that it is the better way. This does not mean, of course, that they are necessarily free of disturbing reactions, but it does mean that they can draw upon an understanding of realities as a help in accepting the situation. Children are often very astute in evaluating the respective roles of their mother and father, and even in correcting their own misconceptions and distortions about the parents' relationships, some inculcated or reinforced perhaps by the parents themselves. An adolescent girl remained with her unhappy mother after a divorce in

which the mother felt bitter and hostile toward the father, who, she believed, had dealt with her most unfairly. The relationship between the daughter and father had always been rather good, but she felt deeply his unfairness to the mother and became very resentful toward him. But during the several months when the daughter remained with her mother and saw her father only on brief visits, she came to her own conclusions about the father's personality and saw more clearly her mother's distorted view of her life situation. She concluded that each had contributed to the unhappiness in family life and she accepted the separation as the best solution.

Harmful Parental Attitudes

We will assume that any parent knows the desirability of not exposing a child to dissatisfactions and resentments toward an estranged mate. Most parents will take it for granted that it is undesirable to be critical of the other in speaking with the child. But many do not appreciate the fact that it is most important, particularly for the young child, to maintain his conception of his parents as good people who love him. This may prove very difficult and is indeed impossible where there are deeply disturbing unconscious attitudes of depreciation and hostility toward an estranged mate. There may also be the harsh fact that one or both parents may not be "good people," and do not love him. Here a greater or lesser degree of trauma to the child is inescapable, and it then becomes important that others come to play a real role as acceptable parent-like persons.

For young children divorce should not be permitted to cause uncertainty or continuing change in their place and way of living. If the child is deprived of either mother or father, some thought should be given to making it possible for other suitable adults to play some role in the child's life. Other adult relatives may occupy a meaningful place in his world, making up in some part for the lacks in his own family life.

The most important consideration is that the parents themselves understand their real motives in seeking divorce, their basic attitudes toward marriage and mate and the nature of the disturbance that results in the decision to break up the family life. If they are able to do this, they are then more likely to understand how their attitudes are affecting their growing children, and how to create a healthier situation, both for their own and the children's needs. Without such understanding, divorce, while removing some immediate sources of unhappiness, may fail to bring basic improvement for the members of the family.

A Child Goes Forth

SARA DUBO, M.D. and ERNEST M. GRUENBERG, M.D.

DR. SARA DUBO, Canadian psychiatrist, has for the past ten years been engaged in research in clinical medicine and in psychiatry. In Canada she has worked at hospitals connected with the University of Manitoba and the Banting Institute and at the Toronto Psychiatric Hospital; in the United States at the Bellevue Psychiatric Hospital. During the war Dr. Dubo served as Psychiatrist-in-charge in the Mental Hygiene Program of the Women's Army Corps.

DR. ERNEST GRUENBERG is a fellow in the Department of Psychiatry at Bellevue Hospital, New York University. He is a graduate of Swarthmore College and of Johns Hopkins Medical School, and was on the house staff of St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Washington before joining the 101st Airborne Division during the war.

There was a child went forth every day,
And the first object he looked upon and received
with wonder, pity, love, or dread, that object he
became,
And that object became part of him for the day, or
a certain part of the day, or for many years, or
stretching cycles of years. . . .
His own parents . . .
The family usages, the language, the company, the
furniture . . .
Men and women crowding fast in the streets . . .
These became part of that child who went forth
every day, and who now goes, and will always
go forth every day.*

WALT WHITMAN, in these lines written almost ninety years ago, gave poetic expression to a psychological concept of major importance for any era—the interrelationship between personality and culture.

The generalizations and formulations of biologists and psychologists regarding the child's development can have meaning only as they are related to the cul-

tural setting in which he lives. The child cannot be understood except in relation to his world. Ruth Benedict points out that "no individual can arrive even at the threshold of his potentialities without a culture in which he participates."¹

Since people differ both in individual characteristics and in their relationship to their society, a culture influences them differently; but in one way or another its patterns are reflected in the personalities of all who are exposed to it.

Our present-day American culture has made life easier and more secure in some ways for our children; and progress in the conquest of nature has removed many fears. Where but a few generations ago malnutrition and a high rate of childhood deaths were taken for granted, today in this country each case of rickets or scurvy is criticized as evidence of neglect; and deaths among children are rare enough to make each case a matter of concern. But while many earlier sources of fear and insecurity have been removed, certain older social patterns remain and new ones have evolved which tend to produce conflict and anxiety and to obstruct mental and emotional maturing.

The most significant of these traits in American culture are the overwhelming emphasis on conformity and the great discrepancy between moral teachings and reality. Problems related to these trends arise from our stress upon success, the inferior status occupied by certain minority groups, our espousal of the doctrine of the self-made man, and the changes in our family pattern. Although much more research is needed, our present knowledge appears to warrant certain conclusions and to suggest further studies.

Cultural forces affect the personality largely through their influence on the individual's concept of himself. This "ego-attitude" is perhaps the most important feature of the child's total personality. What he conceives himself to be is much more significant for him than what he actually is; it determines in large measure his feelings of adequacy, his adaptiveness and the ease with which he acts socially. Ego-attitude is largely culturally determined since it cannot evolve in isolation; we see ourselves in terms of the standards of our society.

It is important to recognize that the child becomes

* Whitman, Walt. *There was a child went forth. Leaves of Grass.*

¹ Benedict, Ruth. *Patterns of Culture.* Boston, Houghton-Mifflin Co., 1934.

individualized not only in such personal matters as physical appearance, temperament, intelligence and skills, but also in such fortuitous group relationships as home, race, religion, nationality and economic class. The child's sense of belonging and of a concomitant security normally begins in the home. As the child moves on from infancy centered in self and home, he identifies himself progressively with wider and wider groups—playmates, neighborhood, school, church, community. And these identifications merge and become as much a part of the self as his physical attributes.

Long before he reaches school age the child knows that he is being watched, judged and compared with others and he is made to wonder and to worry about how he rates. Regardless of his inherent capacities, every child is expected to measure up to rigid standards, to conform. We have set up arbitrary norms in all spheres and although the validity and usefulness of many may be questioned, the child who does not meet them is treated as a non-conformist and made to feel that he is "different." Since the actual range of variation among normal children is far greater than that permitted by these standards, it is almost impossible for any child to conform in all fields, and the average American child, therefore, judged by the standards of his own culture, can only be considered a deviate from the desirable pattern. The significance of this paradox as a source of anxiety becomes clear when we realize what "being different" means in our culture today. Ruth Benedict reports of America:

"Eccentricity is more feared than parasitism. Every sacrifice of time and tranquillity is made in order that no one in the family may have any taint of non-conformity attached to him. Children in school make their greatest tragedies out of not wearing a certain kind of stockings, not joining a certain dancing class, not driving a certain car. The fear of being different is the dominating motivation recorded in Middletown."

This obsessive need to conform and the inability to accept the differences which are normal in a population like ours find expression in all our institutions. They play a particularly important role in parent-child relations because of the changing pattern of our family life. As families tend to be much smaller than in previous generations, each child becomes the focus of more attention and of more solicitude about his conforming. Made overanxious by the cultural emphasis on conformity, many parents push the child beyond his developmental capacities, or in a direction unsuited to him. Sometimes parents set for the child

an adult standard, disregarding the normal differences between the child's conduct and thinking and their own. Thus at all age levels impossible demands are made upon children. Very early, long before his nervous system is ready for bowel control, he is expected to be toilet-trained and countless devices are directed toward this end, varying from the ingenious to the grotesque. Later, many parents, fearing that their child will be considered asocial or "selfish," place premature emphasis on giving and sharing before he has had sufficient experience to integrate social attitudes and concepts. Walking, speech and reading are other areas in which this type of early pressure frequently prevails. In each case the results are tension in the home, frustration to the child and often the beginnings of more serious maladjustment.

"Be a Success"

The older child is often admonished: "Be a success, make something of yourself." But the setting of goals can be constructive and salutary only if they are appropriate to the child's capacities and stage of development. Bill's family has always "done well" at school; he must do likewise although his I.Q. is 82. Girls go to parties and have dates; so must Alice even though she is socially immature and frightened of boys. The girl next door won a scholarship in music; Jean must play although she is almost tone deaf and each lesson is a new torture. All the family have been lawyers or at least schoolteachers; John, who has great manual dexterity and little verbal skill, must avoid even mentioning his wish to be a garage mechanic. The chances are that Bill will find school a source of anxiety that will mar his other relationships, Alice will become more frightened and inhibited, Jean rebellious, and John unhappy and apathetic in a life that offers little satisfaction. Parents of children pushing them to success, force upon them failures that will be reflected in their ego-attitude and in their social-adjustment patterns.

Society's standards are important measuring-rods for the child and the degree to which he feels himself conforming to them is a major factor in determining his personality. Yet in our culture the standards are often superficial and spurious and little related to useful social functions. Our attitudes toward physical appearance and the "I.Q." are typical.

The standard of beauty emanating from Hollywood and the cosmetic industry can be met only by artifice, and it changes from year to year. None the less the need to conform to these stereotypes of ap-

pearance is sufficiently strong to make their attainment a major preoccupation for our rising generation and a source of much unhappiness and anxiety to those who cannot meet the requirements.

Our approach to intelligence has tended to glorify the I.Q. as of value in itself, with little regard to its operation in human relations. Leading educators and thoughtful persons generally recognize the fallacies involved, but schools and homes everywhere continue to stress school "marks." Even in the first grade of the average school, children quickly become aware of their ranks in the group, and the lesser endowed take on the stigma and burden of being "inferior."

The severely handicapped child faces problems of rejection or depreciation to a much greater degree. The very unattractive child, the crippled, the mentally retarded have no place in our society. They are not accepted and are made to feel that they are not wanted; and often little effort is made to develop such productive capacities as they may have. Their drive for social acceptability and participation is thwarted and their ego-attitude deeply affected, a result emotionally determined by a culture that cannot tolerate the deviate.

Children of Minority Groups

While the tradition of America implies that all men are born equal, in its actual working our culture forces many children to feel rejected or excluded because of color, religion, nationality, or the economic class with which they identify themselves. The Negro child in a world of "white supremacy" must of necessity wonder why he is rejected and he seldom really learns the answer. He finds it difficult to accept his own identity and to buck the barrier set by society to his attainment of success; but in addition he is burdened by an anxiety engendered by his perplexities. Many children of other minority groups experience similar problems arising from rejection or only partial acceptance by a society that has labeled them in advance as "not belonging."

Large numbers of children suffer severe difficulties because of other unacceptable characteristics of their homes or families. Children of poverty-stricken homes or of parents who are unemployed, suspecting that their parents are failures, develop intense feelings of shame often concealed beneath a compensatory pattern of bravado or toughness—which are in time integrated into the personality. Dr. James Plant, in discussing poverty and the individual, states: "The phenomenon that we have observed is what might

be termed the hardening or brutalizing effect of constant financial menace."²

It is clear that for many of the children we have described, the normal process of growing up is made hazardous and devious by environmental circumstances and by cultural pressures beyond their control. Yet we tend to make them feel responsible for their difficulties and failures by continuing to stress the anachronistic doctrine of "the self-made man." This heritage of rugged individualism, stemming historically from the days of our open frontiers, still pervades the teaching in our homes and schools. It suggests to the child: "This is a land of opportunity for all. The way is open. Initiative brings success." It also implies: "It's up to you." It places the onus on the individual and insists he is solely accountable for the ultimate result.

The child sees himself in fantasy as a "successful" adult; success means security, material comfort—somewhat in the manner of Hollywood pictures—and a respected place in community and family life. The chances are in most cases that he will not achieve this ideal, no matter how much initiative or zeal he brings to his efforts. Chisholm, describing the American situation during the depression of the '30s, gives pointed expression to this problem: "Wealth, power and prestige seemed to have no relationship to personal integrity, intellectual or educational equipment, hard work or social value. To know the right people and to be lucky were the requirements for success."³ While people generally may not consciously express their belief that initiative always brings success, and may blame circumstances for their failure, few can escape a feeling of personal responsibility and consequent guilt. It cannot be otherwise in a society that holds the individual responsible for his failure and at the same time makes it difficult or impossible for him to succeed.

Being honest with our children, avoiding false promises and preparing them to meet reality are recognized today as established principles of child care, and children who come from homes where these precepts are grossly violated are expected to be insecure and to find adjustment difficult. But the real fact is that since we persist in teaching about a world that does not exist, all our children, whatever their families, are growing up in a cultural atmosphere of

² Plant, James S. *Personality and the Cultural Pattern*. Commonwealth Fund. 1937.

³ Chisholm, G. B. *The William Alanson White Memorial Lectures. Psychiatry*, Feb. 1946.

(Continued on page 31)

Parents' Questions

The questions published here are selected and discussed by the staff of the Child Study Association, and the answers written by various members. The department is edited by Aline B. Auerbach.

At eight months Joan was eating chopped foods, sometimes with her fingers, sometimes sloppily with a spoon. She is now eleven months old, and since her tenth month she has refused all food but milk in a cup, and doesn't seem to be suffering. I am, though. What shall I do?

Children never learn a new accomplishment all at once. They make two steps forward and slip back one. Is Joan really eating nothing at all except milk? If she is eating only a very little chopped food, that is a great deal. But even if she is eating no solids at all, don't try to force her. You are likely to have greater trouble later on if you do.

There is no harm, however, in trying inducements. Offer the food. If she doesn't want it, try the same thing in different forms—puréed, perhaps, or sweetened with a little sugar. Or try different kinds of solids until you find some she likes. Try seating her at the family table and offering her something you are eating, even out of your own spoon, if that seems attractive to her. But don't insist, if she doesn't want it. Sooner or later, following her own tempo of development, she will accept more solids.

The important thing, after all, is not what specific diet Joan likes, but whether she is well. If your doctor is satisfied with her health, your job is to try to let Joan set her own pace. Be ready to help her learn when she is ready to be helped, and you should find that she will gradually adopt ways of behaving that are more and more grown up.

It isn't easy, of course. Your "suffering" is probably very real, and the advice to sit by patiently and wait is one of the hardest bits of advice for a mother to act on. Maybe if you can think of sitting by and waiting as a form of acting—which it is—you will find yourself less tense about Joan's rate of progress.

My baby girl, 11 months old, has been on self-demand since ten days of age, breast fed, weaned at 9 months, cuddled, loved, everything possible that the authorities suggest has been done. Still,

she will not permit us out of her sight and requires company (anyone's) almost always. Shall I let her cry it out alone or keep on having her constantly with the family group?

As our babies grow out of the infancy period when most of their social life consists in being fed, changed and put to sleep, they seem to develop an enormous appetite for our company. They love to be in the center of family life. Your daughter may be merely expressing this normal characteristic of growth in her insistence on enjoying your constant company. Unfortunately, as you point out, this pleasant growth in social awareness isn't always balanced by corresponding increases in the ability to play contentedly alone.

In encouraging this latter quality you can make good use of your child's new urge to sociability. Rather than "letting her cry it out alone" your cue is to be sure you give her many opportunities to stay within the interesting circle of family activities, but not as the center and focus of all attention. Give her a pot and a spoon to bang as you sit nearby preparing the vegetables. "Mama's busy; baby's busy" is a companionable work-together concept to initiate early.

In this way you help her to understand where she stands in her family and how it is possible, without always being in active relation to others, still to remain an important and well-loved person. It is out of this feeling that the ability to play alone develops most satisfactorily.

My little girl has recently entered the kindergarten. She cries bitterly every morning and begs to be allowed to stay home. Shall I make her go, or would it be wiser to wait until she is six?

Has your little girl given school a chance? When you say she has cried every day, it sounds as if she may be afraid of the idea of school rather than of school itself. To her school may mean just a place that separates children from their mothers. Leaving home for the first time is a very dramatic step in any child's life. There's bound to be some uneasiness and it does involve a sacrifice. In the earlier years the child has already given up many satisfactions for the joy of new accomplishments: his bottle was very precious but he was weaned; excreting

was his own affair and he didn't want to be interfered with, but he eventually was toilet trained. Going to school is one more step in his development. The child accepts the separation from home for the companionship, the prestige, the feeling of being grown-up that school offers. It is quite likely that your child too could enjoy these satisfactions.

Do all you can to show her that going to school does not mean losing her home and her mother. This can best be done by making school an established part of her life like brushing her teeth, getting dressed or wearing rubbers. These routines did not come all at once. In the same way, school may, for a time, mean only being there an hour a day and that hour may be spent silently watching. Maybe in watching the others she'll wish that she were one of them and then she'll welcome your help and that of the teacher. (Yes, this implies the cooperation of the school and the teacher.)

If you postpone school, you're not only not solving her problem but you're missing your chance too. When she is of legal school age she may go because "there's a law," but she may feel just as she did at five. "Making" her go sounds harsh and cruel, but I'm afraid that whatever you do will at first seem like "making" to her. Be sure you aren't just forcing her to go, but rather that you are helping, understanding and supporting her. Let us remember, too, how important it is that the mother herself be ready for her child to take this first step out of the home.

How can I help my adolescent daughter to overcome her anxieties about herself? She seems so unsure, especially in relation to boys, and she doubts her own attractiveness.

This is a difficult period for most girls—and difficult for mothers too, since often they must play a waiting game. Some girls mature in these things much earlier than others. There is no way of hurrying it along.

Both the don'ts and the do's are important in the situation. Don't push or try in all sorts of obvious and therefore painful ways to put your daughter in the limelight or urge dates upon her that aren't forthcoming. Perhaps she really isn't ready for them, and only feels pressed toward them by the expectations of others, including her own friends. Don't try to glamorize her with clothes and cosmetics in which she feels uncomfortable. Don't harp on her lacks or deficiencies or point to the techniques of other girls you think she should imitate. And don't make indirect

allusions to this problem either to her or to other people in her presence.

Do whatever you can to include her in the casual social life of the whole family. See that your own social interests cut across the generations so that varied experiences come her way. Of course, help her to dress and look her best and accept invitations if you can do it without arousing her opposition.

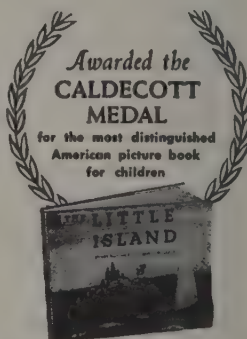
Above all, respect the abilities and interests which come easily to your daughter. Help her to develop these and to enjoy them. As she gains more and more confidence in her real abilities she will find herself better able to put herself across on the basis of these qualities, and she will be increasingly able to believe too in the likelihood of her success with boys.

It is important to remember that development in this respect, as in many others, is highly variable. Not only do some girls mature more slowly, but some never become the furiously sought-after ones. Sometimes their happiest boy-girl relations develop in connection with their work interests. In any case, the popular, apparently self-confident adolescent is by no means invariably the woman who finds most happiness in marriage.

— This lovely story of the life on a little island in the ocean makes a book which the *Chicago Sun* calls "Superbly beautiful," and about which the *Philadelphia Inquirer* wrote, "In a year of many beautiful books . . . it remains outstanding." Up to 8 years. \$2.50

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Suggestions for Study Groups

This outline is based on the articles in this issue on the general theme of "Children's Fears," and is offered as a guide to readers who wish to use CHILD STUDY as source material for group study and discussion. The department is edited by Margaret Meigs.

UNDERSTANDING CHILDREN'S FEARS

BACKGROUND FOR DISCUSSION:

In the process of growing up, in establishing himself as a person, in finding his place in his family and identifying himself as a member of his sex, a child is constantly making adjustments of which he is only dimly, if at all, aware. Many apparently superficial fears are really expressions of those hidden difficulties carried over from the past or disturbing him in the present.

In arming children against potential anxieties and in helping them to cope with existent fears, anything which builds up confidence and competence is a valuable aid. There are definite ways in which parents can contribute to this confidence.

TO DISCUSS:

Some "fears" disappear in time, some seem to hang on for longer periods in one form or another. How does your own experience illuminate this observation? How does this fit in with your understanding of the basic causes of fear and anxiety?

Fear, anxiety, often expresses itself in a disguised form. What are some of these disguises?

Why doesn't it help a fearful or timid child to urge him to be a "big boy" or to ridicule his fear?

A CHILD GOES FORTH

BACKGROUND FOR DISCUSSION:

A source of fears and anxieties lies in the pressures and conflicting demands of American culture today.

Our emphasis on the importance of "being like the others" ignores the fact that individuals differ widely in personalities, capabilities, and opportunities. Individuals are expected not only to conform but also to excel, and competition sets standards of achievement beyond the scope of the average person. The individual nevertheless is blamed for any failure to excel or conform, since we idealize the successful self-made man. Further confusions arise from the fact that home, church, school, and democratic theory teach the importance of love and cooperation and equally demand the exercise of competition and exclusion. In their attitude toward their children and in their role as citizens, parents influence the impact of the culture on their children's personalities.

TO DISCUSS:

How can the home, the school, take account of the great differences between individuals and still set up standards of achievement which are an honest challenge?

What form of school report can help parents to encourage children to do their best without putting pressure on children to do the impossible?

Can you give examples at home, in school, or among friends, of situations in which competition is harmful and in which competition is valuable?

Are there children in your community who do not get a fair chance in our democracy? What accounts for their special handicaps? What can your group do to help?

Remember a study group can also be an action group. What recommendations for a better community can grow out of your discussions?

THE THREAT OF DIVORCE

BACKGROUND FOR DISCUSSION:

Divorce is like surgery, necessary under certain circumstances but never accomplished without disturbance. The effect on children of the kind of tensions that lead to divorce are various and difficult to minimize.

It is hard for children of divorced parents to develop the constructive attitudes about home life, about the nature of adult responsibilities, and about themselves as persons, which normal home life can encourage.

Divorce, though in some cases recommendable, is not necessarily a cure for conditions that make a marriage unsatisfactory. The better understanding that parents have of their real motives in seeking divorce, the better able they will be to protect their children as far as possible from damaging consequences of their decision.

TO DISCUSS:

Attitudes toward divorce in some communities make it harder for children of divorce to grow up normally. How does your community rate in this respect?

What kind of preparation for marriage makes divorce less likely: in the home; in schools; through community agencies?

What services or opportunities for this preparation does your community provide?

PLANNING A MEETING

"Children's Fears" is a topic of understandable importance to all who deal with children. It would be desirable because of the involved nature of the subject to have especially skilled and experienced leadership.

A goal of the meeting might be to develop among the members a better understanding of the causes of anxiety; greater sensitivity to signs of distress in children and awareness of the kind of help that enables children to develop wholesome confidence. Along with this members need to be encouraged themselves to a feeling of confidence in their ability to aid their children or to find other help for them.

Obviously the meeting cannot turn into a clinic, not even if you have a child psychiatrist as guest speaker. Parents' questions about what to do can rarely be answered, but they can often be interpreted. It is the leader's responsibility to point out this difference and to make the individual parent's private concern a problem of general interest to the group.

The following new films can be used as a starting point for discussion of the causes of fear and ways of helping children to wholesome emotional development. Descriptions of the films can be obtained from the rental source.

The Feeling of Rejection—National Film Board of Canada, 620 Fifth Avenue, New York City.

Meeting Emotional Needs in Childhood: The Groundwork of Democracy—Film Library, New York University, Washington Square, New York 3, N. Y.

TO READ:

Jersild, A. T. *Child Psychology*. Chapters 7 and 8. "Feeling and Emotion." Prentice Hall. Rev. 1947.

Isaacs, Susan. *The Nursery Years*. Vanguard. 1936.

"The Adolescent and the Social Order." Section III in *Adolescence*. Forty-third Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education. Part I. Distributed by the Department of Education, University of Chicago. 1944.

Parents' Questions. Staff of the Child Study Association. Chapter 6. "Emotional Growing Pains"; Chapter 11. "What Is a Problem Child?" Chapter 12. "Parents as People." Harper. Rev. 1947.

Some Special Problems of Children Aged 2 to 5 Years. Eight pamphlets. By Nina Ridenour and Isabel Johnson. New York City Committee on Mental Hygiene, 125 East 22nd Street, New York City.

Science Contributes

PSYCHIC TRAUMA OF OPERATIONS IN CHILDREN *

DAVID M. LEVY, M.D.

DR. DAVID M. LEVY is Assistant Professor of Psychiatry at Columbia University. He was Chief of Staff of the Institute for Child Guidance in New York for six years and was formerly President of the American Orthopsychiatric Association. He is, in addition to having many other professional memberships, a fellow of the American Psychiatric Association.

IMPRESSED by the number of cases in which fears, anxieties and other symptoms closely followed an operative procedure, I reviewed my records for some years past in order to determine how frequently such difficulties arose.

The findings are given in the table below. All operative procedures regardless of form are included in this table. They include inoculations, treatments of small cuts and the like. However, the vast majority of operations were tonsillectomies and adenoidectomies (88 cases). Only first operative procedures are included. In determining the percentage of children with emotional after effects only such patients as revealed manifest symptoms were included.

The children who were subjects of this study represent a selected group—children referred to a psychiatrist because of behavior problems. It may be thought, for that reason, that their reactions to the operation do not represent those of normal children and that generalizations applying to normal children cannot be drawn from the present data. These data, however, warrant the conclusion that reactions of this group would not differ widely from those of a so-called normal sampling. Thirteen of the 25 children who had untoward reactions showed no evidence of any difficulty previous to the operative procedure. The total group of 124 presented, in the main, a variety of mild behavior problems, with 16 instances of definite psychopathology.

<i>Age at Time of First Operation</i>	<i>Total Number of Children</i>	<i>Percentage with Emotional Sequelae</i>
Under 1 year	2	0
1 year	12	58
2 years	24	33
3 years	19	16
4 years	17	12
5 years	18	6
6-8 years 11 mos.	19	11
9-11 years plus	13	8
Total	124	20

It will be noted that the largest percentage of post-operative symptoms occurred in the one-year-old children. The two-year-old children also supplied a fairly large number of untoward reactions. Starting with the three-year-old group, there was a definite drop. Among the children under three years of age, besides higher frequency, there was greater intensity of response than in the older children.

Why are operations so much more hazardous for one- and two-year-old children than for older ones? Considered in its most frightening aspect, an operation represents an experience of pain performed by strange persons in a strange place after forcible separation from the familiar home and the protecting mother—the main source of security. A full pattern of emotional response to this situation would lead to fear of all strangers, of all places outside the home and of all possible hurts and to desperate clinging to the mother. This pattern of response actually occurred in a number of my patients.

One- and two-year-old children, as compared with older children, have a keener response to pain, are more dependent on their mothers and have less experience in social contacts and visits outside the home and less comprehension of what is to take place. Their world is much more circumscribed. Their security in life is invested to the highest degree in home and mother. For them the operative experience is more acute in every phase.

They are also less well equipped to handle anxiety. Night terrors occur especially in this period of life.

* Condensed from "Psychic Trauma of Operations in Children," *American Journal of Diseases of Children*, Vol. 69, January 1945, pp. 7-25.

They indicate a break-through of fear during sleep. The fearful event is not played out with toys, as in the older group, because the children do not yet possess the words, the concepts and the skill required. Three-year-old children play out the operation. They repeat parts of it many times. They also transpose the roles so that they play the surgeon operating on a doll. Older children may join with others in this type of play.

It is difficult, moreover, to explain to a one- or two-year-old child what the operation is all about. This is done freely with the older group. For one- and two-year-old children, then, the operation is a raw and brutal experience, difficult to comprehend as a health-giving device and difficult to transform and relate to other experiences by the use of thoughts and fantasy. Their means of dispelling anxiety are limited to distracting play, random muscular activity, close contact with the mother and her simple assurance that everything is all right.

The high degree of emotional distress resulting from an operation in the first two years of life makes it advisable to postpone it, if possible, to the age of three years or later, when the child's comprehension and ability to master anxiety are developed to a higher degree. It becomes especially important to postpone the operation if the patient is going through night terrors at the time or manifests fear or more than the usual dependency on the mother.

A review of case studies in which no untoward emotional symptoms followed an operation reveals clearly the procedure that should guide the surgeon in preventing psychologic distress to his patient. The case studies confirm the observations already made. The children who remained free of emotional difficulties after operation had been told the reason for the operation and how it would be performed. They were taken to the hospital by the mother or father and anesthetized or given sedatives in the bedroom. After the operation the mother or the father or a governess was there to greet them, usually with a present. Under the conditions described the children were spared the following experiences recorded in the text and in the appended records: being tricked into the hospital; being wheeled down a corridor; struggling against the anesthetic; suddenly seeing weird instruments; seeing the white surgical room; seeing many people in white, some in the distance and some hovering over them, and returning to a new bedroom with a strange nurse in white.

I do not mean to imply that children have not sur-

vived operations well in a psychologic sense in spite of the experiences enumerated. In fact, some of them accepted and enjoyed every phase of them. A number even in the four-year-old group spoke enthusiastically in detail about "my operation." Nevertheless, the data collected reveal all too clearly the emotional hazards.

The prophylactic procedures require elaboration:

1. A detailed and accurate explanation of the operation is not important. It is important that the child feel it is a necessary thing to do and that the operation be "explained." The feeling that a thing is explained, even if the explanation is inaccurate, relieves tension. The explanation should be simple and brief and repeated as many times as necessary.

2. Going to the hospital with a familiar person, preferably with the person the child is closest to, is obviously necessary to reduce the feeling of apprehension.

3. It is best in the case of a young child to have the mother help him to bed. Administration of a sedative preceding use of anesthetic is advantageous.

4. Whenever possible the child should be spared the experience of seeing instruments, seeing the operating room, riding up and down in the elevator, etc. After falling asleep in his bedroom, he should, if possible, wake up in the same room.

5. When he wakes, the mother should be there to greet him. This point is especially important. A child in a strange place, often for the first time in his life, and in acute distress should at least have the security of his own protecting mother.

In principle, the operative experience should be divested, as far as possible, of the strange, the frightening and the unfamiliar. No doubt, in time, the surgeon will consider the psychic response of his patient before, during and after the operation as intimate a part of his problem as the surgical technique.

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New Books for Children

SUGGESTIONS FOR CHRISTMAS GIVING

By the Children's Book Committee of the Child Study Association of America

THE titles suggested here as an aid to holiday shopping are selected from a more comprehensive list of the year's books which will be published in pamphlet form in the early spring. These books as well as others are on exhibit at the Association's headquarters.

CHRISTMAS STORIES

- AN ANGEL IN THE WOODS.** By Dorothy P. Lathrop. Macmillan. \$2.00. Christmas Eve in the woods, a toy angel and a miracle create a charming fantasy. (6-10)
- BIG SUSAN.** By Elizabeth Orton Jones. Macmillan. \$2.00. A doll-house family comes alive on Christmas Eve. Enchanting story filled with pictures, detail and humor. (7-10)
- ONCE IN THE YEAR.** By Elizabeth Yates. Illus. by Nora S. Unwin. Coward-McCann. \$2.00. The legend of animals talking on Christmas Eve in a tender story with appealing illustrations. (8-12)
- THE GOLDEN CHRISTMAS BOOK.** By Gertrude Crampton. Illus. by Corinne Malvern. Simon & Schuster. \$1.50. Lively, profusely illustrated family book of stories, poems, games and things to do and make for the holiday season.

FOR THE YOUNGEST

Ages Two, Three and Four

- READ-TO-ME STORYBOOK.** Compiled by the Child Study Association of America. Illus. by Lois Lenski. Crowell. \$2.00. Stories and verses for the very youngest listener to hear over and over again—full of this beloved artist's rollicking drawings.
- ROMNEY GAY'S BIG PICTURE BOOK.** Rhymes and Pictures of Children at Play. Grosset. \$1.00. Colorful, big pictures and well-selected rhymes for the very young.
- FUN FOR BABY.** Pictures by Dean Bryant.
- MY FIRST ANIMAL BOOK.** Pictures by Tony Brice. Rand McNally. \$.75 each. Two very first baby books with bright colors and simple one-to-a-page pictures on sturdy cardboard.
- THE SMART LITTLE BOY AND HIS SMART LITTLE KITTY.** By Louise Woodcock. Pictures by Lucienne Bloch. Scott. \$1.25. All the things a little boy can do that a kitten can't—and vice versa—make a lovable picture book.
- WINTER NOISY BOOK.** By Margaret Wise Brown. Pictures by Charles G. Shaw. Scott. \$1.35. Another in this picture-book series, this time about all the sights and sounds of winter.
- GOODNIGHT MOON.** By Margaret Wise Brown. Pictures by Clement Hurd. Harper. \$1.75. In a gradually darkening room, bunny, in his big bed, dozes off. A perfect go-to-sleep picture-story.
- WHITE SNOW, BRIGHT SNOW.** By Alvin Tresselt. Pictures by Roger Duvoisin. Lothrop. \$2.00. All the softness and mystery of snowfall in a quiet text combined with jolly pictures of winter work and play.
- SURPRISE FOR DAVY.** By Lois Lenski. Oxford. \$1.00. Pocket-size birthday story introducing all of Davy's party guests in child-like pictures.

THE HAPPY FAMILY. By Nicole. Illus. by Gertrude Elliott. Simon & Schuster. \$.25. Friendly picture-story of the day's doings in an inexpensive little book.

BENJAMIN BUSYBODY. By Lorraine Beim. Pictures by Violet La Mont. Harcourt. \$2.00. Endearing picture tale of a happy little boy busily doing familiar things.

THE GROWING STORY. By Ruth Krauss. Pictures by Phyllis Rowand. Harper. \$1.75. A little boy finds that he, like his puppy and chickens, has grown with the changing seasons.

ONE IS THE ENGINE. By Esther Meeks. Illus. by Ernie King. Wilcox. \$1.00. Exceptionally well-illustrated book about trains.

Ages Five, Six and Seven

FOR A CHILD. Great Poems Old and New. Collected by Wilma McFarland. Illus. by Ninon Westminster. \$2.50.

THE LITTLE GOLDEN BOOK OF POETRY. Illus. by Corinne Malvern. Simon & Schuster. \$.25.

BROTHER, BABY AND I. Poems and Rhymes. Selected and illustrated by Pelagie Doane. Grosset. \$1.00.

Three excellent poetry collections, delightfully illustrated. One large, one small, one medium; each a good value for the family bookshelf.

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CHANTICLEER. By Roger Duvoisin. Grosset. \$.50. Delightfully amusing is this story of the famous rooster who thought he made the sun rise. Droll illustrations to match.

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MR. DOODLE. By Sally Scott. Illus. by Beth Krush. Harcourt. \$1.75. The training of a clumsy but lovable cocker spaniel makes a lively story in an easy reader for seven-year-olds.

THE SLEEPY LITTLE LION. Photographs by Ylla. Words by Margaret Wise Brown. Harper. \$1.75. Between sleepy spells the little lion (photographed superbly) goes into the world to meet children, cats and rabbits.

SMOKY POKY. By Bill and Bernard Martin. Tell-Well Press. \$1.00. Exciting and amusing adventures of a very little engine which accomplished big things by cooperating. Pictures full of motion.

THE DOUBLE BIRTHDAY PRESENT. By Mabel Leigh Hunt. Lippincott. \$1.50. Gently paced story of twin Quaker girls. Delightful moral and charming illustrations.

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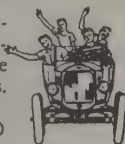


Anchor Man

By JESSE JACKSON

The author of *Call Me Charley* writes an exciting story which not only explores the relationship between Negroes and whites but also the more subtle ones between Negroes themselves. *Illustrated by Doris Spiegel.*

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By RALPH and ADELIN LINTON

A lively and informative book about man's progress from his humble beginnings to his present complexity. "Excellent anthropology . . . fascinating reading."—*Virginia Kirkus.* *Illustrated by Raine Renshaw.*

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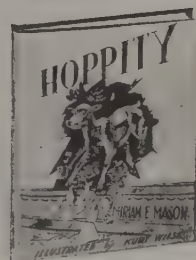
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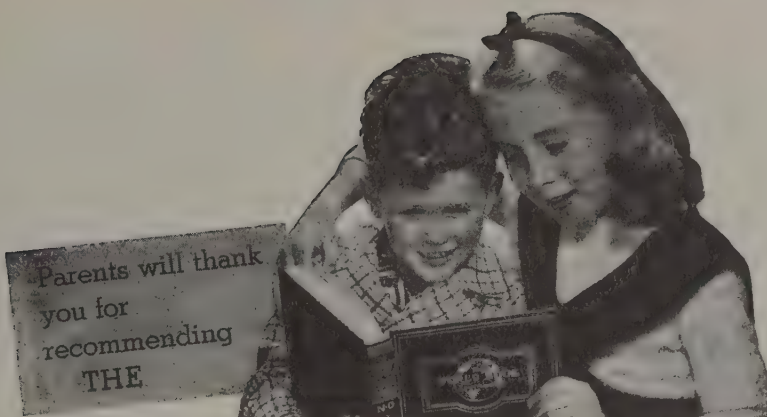


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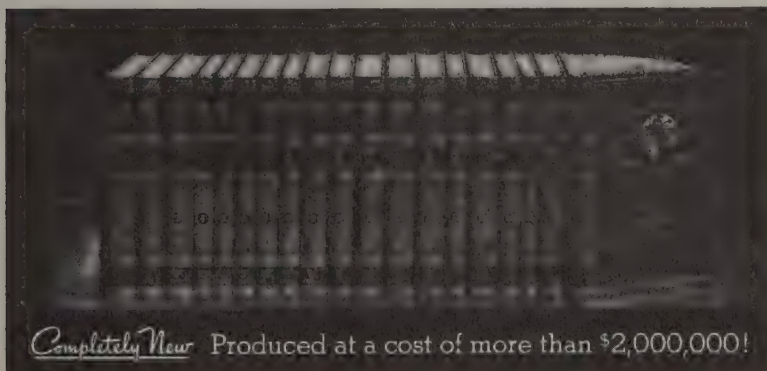
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Book Reviews

Parents' Questions: revised edition. By the Staff Members of the Child Study Association of America. Harper Brothers, New York, 1947. \$3.00.

This guide for parents, presented in the form of questions and discussions, has enjoyed wide popularity and has become a standard work in its field since it appeared in its first edition in 1936. Sidonie Matsner Gruenberg points out in her preface that the material presented has evolved from the Child Study Association's experience in parent guidance over many years; its first study group was organized in 1888. This wealth of experience in helping parents through "the perplexities big and little that are part and parcel of raising a family in the world as it is today" finds ample expression in this volume.

The book is extremely well organized and succeeds in covering a great deal of material with maximum economy. It deals mainly with the wide range of common problems of the normal child. The questions posed by parents are presented in twelve broad groupings (habits, discipline, sex, school and home, etc.) each covering a major field of childhood experience and in each case are arranged in chronological order. This provides a developmental approach that views the child in the light of problems of his growth and maturation. Relationships in the home are stressed with a judicious emphasis on dynamic processes. The role of cultural pressure on family patterns and adjustment is recognized and the authors avoid the tendency to "blame" the parents, that has marred so many other efforts of this type.

One of the outstanding features of *Parents' Questions* is the stress it places on preventive psychiatry; throughout the book mental hygiene principles are emphasized and are applied in numerous examples. Some of the problems described are beyond the range of average and suggest severe disturbance. The authors have been careful to point out these instances and to delineate where professional help is indicated. One of the new chapters in this edition, "What Is a Problem Child?" considers the neurotic child who needs special help and draws excellent portraits of common neurotic patterns. At the same time the authors wisely caution parents against the common hazards of interpreting normal behavior as disturbed, or attempting to diagnose complicated problems without guidance.

The discussions are presented in lucid terms and avoid unnecessary theorizing. At the same time psychological principles are drawn from many points of view. The emphasis is on a practical approach that the parent can use for help. Two new chapters have been added to this second edition, "What Is a Problem Child?" and "New Vistas for the Family," both of which add value to the book. This volume, stemming from the dynamic background of the work of the Child Study Association in parent guidance, can be recommended as perhaps the outstanding work in the field.

S. BERNARD WORTIS, M.D.
RALPH D. RABINOVITCH, M.D.
*Department of Psychiatry,
New York University College
of Medicine*

World on My Doorstep. By Harriet Eager Davis. Simon & Schuster, New York. \$3.00.

An American woman gives a delightfully vivid picture of her home life in Switzerland as the wife of a specialist in international affairs who is a member of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. From the tone of her book, Mrs. Davis is as wholeheartedly as her husband a specialist in international relations. But she is also a lively, animated, attractive, lovable, vital American wife, mother and homemaker. She makes the pleasantest kind of book out of her housekeeping in Geneva, out of the impact of European life on her intensely American sons, out of genial, sociable Sunday suppers with representatives from all over the world.

The theme of the book, the genuinely illuminating and inspiring "lesson" for American wives and mothers, is the need for us all to stop frittering our time and thoughts away on trivial things. She wants us, with a realizing sense of the solemnity of the hour, to give ourselves to arousing public opinion in opposition to war. Never was a serious and admirable lesson wrapped up in such diverting and entertaining a medium. Full of home-life incidents and interesting everyday details, it is one of the books which would interest everybody in the family circle if read aloud.

DOROTHY CANFIELD

(Reprinted from *Book-of-the-Month Club News*, by courtesy of Book-of-the-Month Club.)

On the Air

PARENT EDUCATION

THE problems of childhood and parent-child relationships are coming to be recognized as an important and serious subject for adult listeners, most of whom are, after all, parents. This upsurge of interest is attested to by several new and vital presentations on three major networks:

Doorway to Life (CBS, Sundays, 1:30-2:00 p.m. EST) is especially noteworthy for its success in making understandable to the ordinary listener those subtle factors that underlie behavior. Authentic case histories of typical parent-child problems, drawn from the records of family counseling agencies, are thoughtfully selected and skilfully dramatized, including the therapeutic measures taken in each case. Script and presentation are handled with rare delicacy, avoiding the sensationalism which would have been too easy. The whole is a heartening demonstration of the capacity of radio to give the materials of parent education—even including the subtleties of child behavior—a universal appeal.

Are These Our Children? (ABC, Sundays, 4:00-4:30 p.m. EST). Somewhat more sensational in handling, this program dramatizes behavior problems that have brought some children to the juvenile courts. Based on case histories, the stories are authentic, believable, and effectively dramatized. The analyses which follow the drama fail, or perhaps do not attempt, to reach the roots of behavior or to clarify the basic emotional problems which underlie these terrifying tragedies. They do, however, make a strong case against some of the social evils and parental mistakes which provide fertile soil for juvenile delinquency.

War Babies (MBS, Sunday, Sept. 28). The first of a series of three, titled "Your Children Today," this was a mature and intelligent documentary, beautifully produced. Its theme: the emotional needs of today's first graders, whose first five years of life were lived amid the family dislocations that go with war. A thoughtful script showed insight and awareness of the nature of these children's problems. The program posed some challenging questions and offered also some helpful answers to the harassed parents and teachers of today's five-year-olds. Titles of future programs in this series will be "Wanted a Baby" (about adoption) and "Children of Divorce."

RADIO COMMITTEE

DR. JAMES S. PLANT

With the death of Dr. James S. Plant, on September 7, 1947, The Child Study Association of America and all groups concerned with the welfare of children, lost an old and valued friend. Dr. Plant's deserved eminence as an authority on child psychology makes his loss especially poignant at this moment when the pressures of world unrest touch the security of every home, rendering a deeper understanding of the child more important than ever. Our readers will remember him best perhaps through his book, *Personality and the Cultural Pattern*, which is widely used as a textbook, and through his frequent thoughtful contributions to our Child Study Conferences and to CHILD STUDY magazine.

Dr. Plant had been for thirty-four years Director of the Essex County Juvenile Clinic in Newark, New Jersey, the oldest tax-supported psychiatric clinic in the United States. Children brought into juvenile court, problem cases from state, city and private agencies, were referred to the Juvenile Clinic, where Dr. Plant's patient study of the causes of the difficulties and his counsel for treatment became so well known that individual parents consulted him as frequently as professional workers.

Before taking this post in 1923, Dr. Plant was psychiatrist at the Judge Baker Foundation in Boston. He was chairman of the National Committee for Mental Hygiene and had conducted courses in child psychology at Rutgers, Yale, Columbia and New York Universities. He was a member of the American Psychological Association, the American Medical Association and other professional societies, and had received a number of honorary degrees. He was a member of the White House Conference on Child Health and Protection.

Dr. Plant was born in Minneapolis, was graduated from Hamilton College in 1912, received his medical degree from the University of Pennsylvania in 1918, and studied later at Cornell and Harvard, and at the Sorbonne in Paris.

Dr. Plant died suddenly, at the age of fifty-seven, of a heart attack, at his home in South Orange, New Jersey. Dr. Plant was never too busy to express his appreciation of the work of others and was most generous in praise of all efforts to improve the spiritual health of children. The Child Study Association pays grateful tribute to the memory of an irreplaceable colleague and friend.

News and Notes

Conference on the Family

To find specific ways in which the American family can be strengthened and made more secure is the purpose of an important project, the National Conference on Family Life, which will be held in Washington at the White House next spring, on May 6, 7 and 8, 1948. This seminar, unprecedented in purpose and in scope, will be entirely supported by private and organizational contributions. One hundred and ten national organizations will be represented at the meetings. The Board of Directors, which represents labor, business, the professions and religious and civic groups, is headed by Eric A. Johnston, president of the Motion Picture Association of America. Boris Shishkin, economist of the American Federation of Labor, will serve as vice-chairman. Dr. Ernest G. Osborne of Teachers' College, Columbia University, and vice-president of Child Study Association of America, will head the technical advisory committee, which will be aided by Government personnel. Dr. Mary

Fisher Langmuir, president, and Sidonie M. Gruenberg, director of the Child Study Association are members of this committee.

"The purpose of the meetings," Mr. Johnston stated, "will be to find specific ways in which all Americans may work together to build their life around a family core and come to grips with the most important problems confronting the family today. Preparations are already under way to make this a real working conference."

New Films For Rent

New films of special interest on topics of child development and family relationships are listed in the third supplement to the film catalogue of New York University Film Library, recently issued. Included are two films which will be shown by their originators at Child Study Headquarters this spring. These are "Grief," by Dr. René A. Spitz, a study of the effects of emotional deprivation

(Continued on page 32)

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We Invite Your Comment

The editors of CHILD STUDY need your comments upon the contents of our magazine. For the most helpful answer received to the following questions, we will send free a copy of "Parents' Questions." Write briefly and, so far as possible, explain the reasons for your preferences. Letters must be mailed by January 15, 1948.

1. Which article in this issue have you found most helpful and interesting and why?
2. Which topics have interested you the least and why?
3. What subjects do you wish to see treated in future issues?
4. What regular features—Parents' Questions, Suggestions for Study Groups, Radio, Children's Books, Book Reviews—do you find most useful?

Are you a parent, a professional worker or both?

Address Editors, CHILD STUDY, 221 West 57th Street, New York 19, New York.

The following letter was chosen as the most interesting comment on our Spring issue and a copy of "Parents' Questions" has been sent to Mrs. Meardon:

Editor, CHILD STUDY:

This is in reply to your invitation for comment on the Spring, 1947, issue of CHILD STUDY:

1. *What article do you like best in this issue and why?*

"Babies in Primitive Societies," by Margaret Mead. Mrs. Mead's words: "If we give the baby interaction with a great many people in a great many situations, without at any time sacrificing its familiarity with one person and one place, we shall get a better human being," seem sensible and encouraging. They open up the possibility of a baby's having warm and satisfying interaction with others early in life instead of a period of comparative vacuity, in an isolation due to adult fears of "germs" or overstimulation.

I like both Dr. Spitz's and Dr. Mead's articles because they bring before us in an orderly and scientific way the necessity for good human relationships from the very beginning of life.

2. *What article do you like least and why?*

I cannot say that I liked any article "least" for I found something worthwhile in all of them. But I am puzzled over the use of the word "democratic" in the article "A Glance Over the Field of Child Development," by Margaret Meigs.

"... Interestingly enough, one finding is that a 'democratic' atmosphere, which expects a child to make decisions beyond his psychic strength, is not an easy environment in which to grow up." It seems to me that the ideal "democratic" atmosphere would naturally consider the child's individual stage of development and not require him to make decisions beyond his psychic growth. Too few people have a true concept of the democratic ideal of child management. Too many people are prejudiced in favor of a too strict "authoritarian" discipline because they associate bad behavior with "self-expressionism." Therefore it does not seem wise to use "democratic" as almost synonymous with "self-expressionism."

3. *What subjects do you wish to see treated in future issues?*

Something about the gap between psychiatry and psychology, which has not been adequately bridged.

4. Of the regular features, Parents' Questions and Book Reviews are most helpful to me.

I am a parent who hopes to become a professional worker in the field of Parent Education. CHILD STUDY is a tremendous inspiration!

JULIA P. MEARDON, Philadelphia, Pa.

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A CHILD GOES FORTH

(Continued from page 12)

dissimulation and sham, so that they reach maturity inadequately prepared for actual living.

This is clearly seen in the great discrepancy between the traditional moral teachings of our culture and the reality. We insist on unqualified love in parent-child and sibling relationships while ambivalence is an established fact. Parents are supported in the pretense that they know everything and are always right, while children, with increasing relationships and experience outside the home, learn that parents are often confused or wrong. We tell the child to love his neighbor, to be truthful and considerate, and then send him into our competitive business world to learn the code of the jungle. We teach "Thou shalt not kill" with deep religious fervor and then say to each new rising generation: "This is different—this is war," and expect them to perform their patriotic duty.

These discrepancies tend to create in the child fear of his own emotions and lead to harmful repressions, as in the case of adolescent sexual interest. In addition, the demands we make upon him are so conflicting that in certain situations he can follow one precept only by violating another and can make neither choice without anxiety. The white child, in the South of "white supremacy," is often torn between the adult teaching that it is wrong to maintain relationships of equality with Negroes and the moral precepts he has been taught in Christian churches.

Perhaps the most important effects on personality of these delusory and unrealistic teachings and standards are confused thinking, conflicting motivations and inadequate understanding of a changing world. It would appear axiomatic that a culture which exacts duplicity as the price of adjustment will also make it difficult for children to develop personal integrity and a mature participation in social affairs.

The influence of certain aspects of our culture upon developing personalities, reflected in fears, conflict and anxiety, is felt by all children; the resulting maladjustment, however, varies in degree with each child and depends upon his particular circumstances.

Parents cannot isolate their children from the world nor hold themselves accountable for the effects of our culture upon them; yet home relationships can play an important role in helping the child meet these pressures.

Parents can best help the child to develop wholesome ego-attitudes by affection and understanding, and by encouraging him to experience achievement in terms of his own capacities. They can help him reduce the confusions and conflicts arising from the contradictory moral standards by recognizing the sources of the varying codes and principles and by clarifying to him the reasons for the diversities. The child normally identifies himself first of all with his parents. By carrying out honestly and sincerely their responsibilities as members of a democratic community, they can help to lead him into healthy and constructive social activities of his own.

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NEWS AND NOTES

(Continued from page 28)

in infancy, to be shown and discussed by Dr. Spitz on January 19, and "Meeting Emotional Needs in Childhood; the Groundwork of a Democracy," produced at Vassar College, to be shown at Child Study Headquarters on February 16, with Dr. Mary Fisher Langmuir leading the discussion. These and a wide selection of other films may be obtained for a low rental fee from the New York University Film Library, New York City. The Library serves communities all over the United States.

Another source of information about films is The Educational Film Library Association, Inc., 1600 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y., which evaluates new films reporting on their age-level suitability, usefulness and technical qualities.

The world's largest producer of 16 mm. films, Coronet, has recently announced that all its films, both silent black and white and those including sound and color, are now available on a rental basis. Regional rental outlets throughout the nation offer this service to schools, churches, study groups and individuals. For further information address Coronet Instructional Films, Coronet Building, Chicago 1, Illinois.

For School Administrators "The Expanding Role of Education" will be the theme of the 1948 convention, to be held in Atlantic City from February 21 to 26, by the American Association of School Administrators. There will be ten general sessions and thirty-six discussion groups attended by representatives of about fifty organizations. All who wish to reserve sleeping accommodations should write immediately to Floyd A. Potter, Chairman AASA Housing Bureau, 16 Central Pier, Atlantic City, N. J.

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